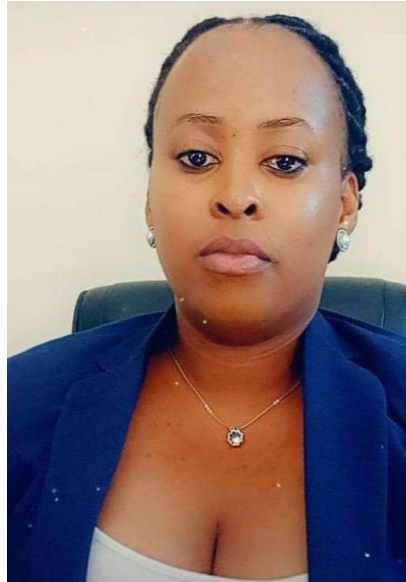


WOMEN JUDGES IN UGANDA

by Monica ARINAITWE



As at 8TH AUGUST 2022, Women judges made up 47% of all court judges in Uganda.

When women enjoy access to education, freedom of choice, protection from violence, harassment and discrimination, particularly in justice sector, they can become powerful human rights champions and agents of change for the benefit of their societies because injustice against women, girls and the vulnerable people never ceases.

Just like their counterparts (Males), female judges also go through similar recruitment procedures in the Judiciary arm of government and rise through the ranks though few make it to the top positions in the judiciary mainly due to negative social norms, harassment, low levels of security, few or no opportunities to maintain work-life balance as some of the barriers to women joining the judiciary and rising through the ranks. Foreexample two out of seven justices sitting at the highest court in Uganda; the Supreme Court are women. This raises questions about gender diversity in the judiciary.

Gender diversity is important because a diverse judiciary is open to new ways of thinking, helping to drive positive change, something particularly important in areas of law that may need to be updated to reflect social shifts, such as in cases relating to women's rights.

Based on the UNDP(United Nations Development Program) report on Gender Justice Platform in Africa on 6th June 2023, official data, trends analysis and interviews with women jurists in Uganda and other African countries, research confirms that women judges are less susceptible to corruption, strengthen gender sensitive decision making and help move away from patriarchal bias finally women's participation in judiciary inspires the next generation of women and creates more opportunities for other women in the sector. Despite these proven benefits, women's representation in judiciary remains low foreexample,

two in seven justices sitting at the highest court in Uganda are women and more often hold positions in lower courts compared to their counterparts.

International Female Judges Association president while in Kampala at her inauguration, Justice Elizabeth Jane Alividza called for appointment of women in judiciary's top brass that while men and women may have common thoughts on some matters, there are some issues on which they may differ noting that men and women do not think alike since men think with the brains unlike women who think with their hearts thus need for gender balance.

Towards the end. U can add.

UECD's commitment and generosity to this cause are a testament to the power of collaboration and shared vision. It is your support to young girls like me that ensures we continue to inspire and empower women and girls in society.

I thank you for the opportunity rendered to me to come up with this article about a topic I have so much interest in.

I remain,

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